

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 NSC-05 NSCE-00 L-01 SP-02

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R 090830Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5582

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 14803

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR AS ID PO

SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER DISAGREES WITH

INDONESIA ON PORTUGUESE TIMOR; MALIK "CLARIFIES GOI POLICY

REF: CANBERRA 7810

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. ACCORDING TO REUTERS STORY DATELINED SINGAPORE AND PUBLISHED IN GOI ANTARA BULLETIN DECEMBER 6, AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER DON WILLESSEE TOLD REPORTERS IN SINGAPORE DECEMBER 5 THAT HE DISAGREED WITH INDONESIA THAT INDEPENDENCE WAS NOT AN ALTERNATIVE FOR PORTUGUESE TIMOR. HE SAID PORTUGUESE TIMOR HAS THREE ALTERNATIVES: TO STAY WITH PORTUGAL, TO BECOME INDEPENDENT, OR TO JOIN INDONESIA.

2. WILLESSEE ADDED THAT PORTUGUESE TIMOR WAS NOT AUSTRALIA'S PROBLEM OR RESPONSIBILITY, ALTHOUGH AUSTRALIA WAS INTERESTED IN THE FUTURE OF THE TERRITORY.

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3. NEXT DAY FOREIGN MINISTER MALIK "CLARIFIED" GOI

POLICY IN RESPONSE TO WILLESSEE'S STATEMENT. ACCORDING
JAKARTA PRESS REPORTS DECEMBER 6, MALIK DENIED INDONESIA
SEES ONLY TWO ALTERNATIVES IN PORTUGUESE TIMOR AND
ACKNOWLEDGED "THEORETICAL" THIRD ALTERNATIVE OF INDEPEND-
ENCE. HOWEVER, HE SAID IT WOULD BE LOGICAL FOR PORTUGUESE
TIMOR TO JOIN INDONESIA, SINCE THE TERRITORY IS TOO FAR
AWAY TO BE PERMANENTLY TIED TO PORTUGAL, AND SINCE IT
COULD NOT STAND ON ITS OWN FEET ECONOMICALLY IF IT BECAME
INDEPENDENT. INDEPENDENCE, THEREFORE, COULD INVITE
"CHAOS", AND INVOLVEMENT BY OUTSIDE FORCES. BOTH
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND AGREED WITH INDONESIA IN TALKS
AT THE UN THAT THIS COULD NOT BE ALLOWED. MALIK ADDED THAT
AUSTRALIA HAD ALREADY INFORMED INDONESIA THAT
IT WOULD NOT BE CONCERNED IF PORTUGUESE TIMOR SHOULD JOIN
INDONESIA. IN ANY CASE, MALIK SAID, DEBATE OVER THE
COLONY'S FUTURE IS PREMATURE, AND THERE IS NO REASON TO
BECOME ALARMED OVER THE MATTER. END UNCLASSIFIED

BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL//LIMDIS//

4. COMMENT: WILLESSEE'S REPORTED STATEMENT RECALLS
HIS COMMENT TO AMBASSADOR GREEN IN CANBERRA NOVEMBER 28,
(REFTEL) THAT HE REGRETTED WAY WHITLAM HAD DISCUSSED TIMOR
WHEN HE SAW SUHARTO IN OCTOBER AND THAT HE THEREFORE PLANNED
TO MAKE STATEMENT THAT AUSTRALIA WOULD PURSUE "HANDS OFF"
POLICY TOWARD PORTUGUESE TIMOR.
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